

KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE



This Public Service Brochure Distributed By

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CALL THE STATEHOUSE TOLL-FREE: 1-800-382-9842

Dear Friend,

This brochure focuses on an issue of growing importance: **How can we keep our children safe?**

Would your child know what to do if he or she got lost at a shopping mall? If a nice looking, friendly stranger offered him or her a ride home after school? If a friend dared him or her to drink some beer or smoke a joint? Or if the baby-sitter or neighbor wanted to play a secret game?

One of the greatest things about kids (but as a parent is also one of the scariest) is their natural trust in people, especially in adults. It's sometimes hard for parents to teach children to balance this trust with caution. But kids today need to know common-sense rules that can help keep them safe - and build the self-confidence they need to handle emergencies.

I hope this brochure is in some way helpful to you in teaching your child rules that can help keep them safe.

Sincerely,

Charlie Brown
State Representative

START WITH THE BASICS

Make sure your children know their full name, address (city and state), and their phone number with area code.

Be sure kids know to call 911 or "0" in emergencies and how to use a public phone. Practice making emergency calls with a make-believe phone.

Tell your children never to accept rides or gifts from someone they and you don't know well.

Teach children to go to a store clerk, security guard, or police officer for help if lost in a mall, a store, or on the street.

Set a good example with your own actions: lock doors and windows, and check to see who's there before opening the door.

Take time to listen carefully to your children's fears and feelings about people and places - especially ones that scare them or make them feel uneasy. Tell them to trust their instincts when something frightens or troubles them.

AT SCHOOL AND PLAY

Encourage your children to walk and play with friends, not alone. Tell them to avoid places that could be dangerous: vacant buildings, alleys, playgrounds or parks with broken equipment and litter.

Teach children to settle

arguments with words, not fists, and to walk away when others are arguing. Remind them that taunting and teasing can hurt friends and make enemies.

Make sure your children are taking the safest routes to and from school, stores, and friends' houses. Walk the routes together and point out places they could go for help.

Check out day care and after-school programs - look at certification, staff qualifications, rules on parental permission for field trips, reputation in the community, policies on parent participation. Drop by for a visit at random times.

AT HOME ALONE

Leave a phone number where you can be reached. Post it by the phone, along with numbers for a neighbor and for emergency situations-police and fire departments, paramedics, and the poison control center.

Have your child check in with you or a neighbor when he or she gets home. Agree on rules for having friends over and for going to a friend's house when no adult is home.

Make sure your child knows how to use the window and door locks.

Tell your child not to let anyone into the home without your permission, and never let a

caller --- at the door or on the phone --- know that there's no adult home. Kids can always say their parents are busy and take a message.

Work out an escape plan in case of fire or other emergencies. Rehearse the plan with your children.

ON THE INTERNET

Set rules and guidelines for



your child's use of the internet, monitor the child's use of on-line services.

Instruct your child to never give out personal information to anyone they talk to on-line.

Advise your child not to arrange a face-to-face meeting without your permission with anyone he/she meets on-line.

PROTECTING YOUR CHILD AGAINST SEXUAL ABUSE

Let your child know that he or she can tell you anything, and that you will always be supportive.

Teach your child that no one - not even a teacher or a close relative - has the right to touch him or her in a way that

feels uncomfortable. Let them know that it's okay to say no, get away, and tell a trusted adult.

Don't force kids to kiss or hug or sit on a grown-up's lap if they don't want to. This gives them control and teaches them that they always have the right to refuse.

Tell your child to stay away from strangers who hang around playgrounds, public restrooms, and schools.

Be alert for changes in your child's behavior that could signal sexual abuse: sudden secretiveness, withdrawal from activities, refusal to go to school, unexplained hostility toward a favorite babysitter or relative, increased anxiety.

Some physical signs of abuse include bed wetting, loss of appetite, venereal disease, nightmares, and complaints of pain or irritation around the genitals.

If your child has been sexually abused, report it to the police or a child-protection agency immediately.

Sexually explicit images, sent to or depicting a child, are against the law. Report violations to the authorities immediately.

If your child is a victim of any crime, from stolen lunch money to sexual abuse, don't blame him or her. Listen and offer sympathy and support.

CHILD SAFETY FINGERPRINT I.D. FORM

FINGERPRINT CHART

R. THUMB		L. THUMB
R. INDEX		L. INDEX
R. MIDDLE		L. MIDDLE
R. RING		L. RING
R. LITTLE		L. LITTLE

PLACE A
RECENT PHOTO
HERE

LAST NAME _____

FIRST NAME _____

MIDDLE NAME _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

SEX	RACE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT
BLOOD TYPE			
EYE COLOR		HAIR COLOR	

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Using a stamp pad (found in many supermarkets or stationery stores), hold your child's finger rigid and place tightly on the pad. After applying ink, transfer lightly to chart.
- Remove ink from fingers with soap and water after chart is completed.
- STORE THIS FORM IN A SAFE PLACE.**

To request additional I.D. forms, call, write, or e-mail
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